

Mayor's Council on Disability
Chattanooga, Tennessee
Meeting Minutes
May 4, 2009

Sandra Booher, Chairperson
Katie Jones, Secretary
Jill Hindman, Parliamentarian

Council Members:

Jim Queen, CARTA Care-A-Van
Tommy Gates, Siskin Hospital for Physical Rehabilitation
Carolyn Boyd, Signal Centers
Carol Martin, TN DRS Corporate Connections, UTK CDE
Phillip Stevens, City of Chattanooga
Karl Epperson
John Jackson
Katie Jones, Merrill Lynch
Bryon Kluesner, UTC Office of Disability
Nichole Myers, AIM Center
Robert White
Matt Lea, Assistant to Mayor, Mayor's Office
Jay Piercy, OMA City Compliance Officer
Kathie Fulgham, Mayor's Office

Absent:

Carolyn Boyd, Signal Centers
Katie Jones, Merrill Lynch
Nichole Myers, AIM Center

Visitors:

Pat Howard
Chris Jackson, TN DMRS
Lana Newton, TN DRS
Jennifer Nichols, Signal Centers
April Taylor, Moccasin Bend

Sandra Booher, Council Chair, welcomed attendees to the May meeting of the Mayor's Council on Disability on Monday, May 4, 2009.

The Council members introduced themselves.

Kathie Fulgham announced that the City's Go!Fest won an award for community relations from the Public Relations Society of America. She said that she has entered the festival into two other competitions that are even more prestigious and is hopeful. She said she cannot think of a more worthwhile group to receive the award. Kathie announced that she had the Go!Fest committee sign up sheets that she will pass around and asked everyone to sign up for a committee. The date for Go!Fest is October 3rd from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. The fundraising has begun; Jill Hindman is helping by contacting the Developmental Disability Council for funds. Several of the committee team members have already started working. Matt Lea asked the Council to recommend a good band for this year since last year's band is unable to perform. Bryon Kluesner said he will talk to Booker Scruggs on the UTC campus. He has played for a few events at UTC and may be interested in playing at Go!Fest. Matt also encouraged everyone to join a committee.

Sandy Booher said that although the Nominating Committee had planned to present a single slate of officers, she understands that Matt Lea has requested that we forgo this and call for nominations from the floor. She announced the current officers and asked for nominations for Chair. Matt nominated John Jackson. Sandy asked John if he were asked in advance and if he is willing to accept this nomination. John agreed. Sandy then called for nominations for Vice Chair. Karl Epperson nominated Jill Hindman; Phillip Stevens nominated Bryon Kluesner; Matt Lea nominated Carol Martin.

Sandy Booher questioned the entire nominating process saying that the nominating committee had a slate of officers that were aware that they were nominated. This calling for nominees from the floor would seem to catch nominees unaware and put them in an embarrassing position. Matt said any nominees that wished should feel free to decline. He added that any nominees that the committee wanted nominated should be nominated now. Sandy added that perhaps the election could be put off for a month. Matt said that it is usual to vote after the nominations are made.

Following this discussion, Sandy called for nominations for Secretary. With no other nominations, Carol Martin nominated herself and respectfully declined the Vice Chair nomination.

Sandy then called for nominations for Parliamentarian. With no other nominations, Carol Martin nominated Jill Hindman, the current Parliamentarian. Carol then asked Sandy if she wanted to nominate herself for Chair since she had earlier volunteered to remain in that position and was on the single slate the committee had prepared. Sandy declined.

The Chair, Secretary and Parliamentarian were elected by acclamation. Bryon received the majority of votes for Vice Chair

Matt Lea discussed the two vacant Council positions. He said he is working on filling them at this time. He said he had yet to receive any further nominations from Council members but if there is anyone other than the original group of nominations that he still has, please forward them to him. Carol Martin added that the unwritten rule was only one person from an agency at one time should serve on the Council. Matt agreed and said that we should try to have half men and half women and we want to make sure that a variety of disabilities are represented either by the person with the disability or by the agency that deals with that particular disability. He also said that the Council needed a Veteran and someone who is hearing impaired. Matt was asked by Jill Hindman if the Council should have a Hamilton County representative. Jill said that CARTA has a county rep. Matt says the by laws do not require this but he felt sure the Mayor would not be opposed to having someone from County Government. Sandy Booher then asked if the by laws addressed the percentage of people with disabilities on the Council. Jill said that the by laws state that 51% or a majority of the Council should have a disability. Matt said he believed we had a majority right now and if we add a person who is deaf and a disabled Vet he is sure we would meet this requirement.

Phillip Stevens said that the recently submitted minutes were already on the website and that only the December minutes were missing.

Jill Hindman was asked if anything was going on with the Stigma Project or DD Council. She said that the Mega Conference is this month from May 28th through May 30th but that registration was closed. The Mega Conference link is on the website.

Sandy Booher asked Phillip Stevens if he has had any inquiries through the website. He said he has only had transfers from the Chamber of Commerce and 311.

Jim Queen reported on CARTA. He said the budget shortfall reported in the newspaper should not affect service and that any shortfall should be covered by additional bus wrapping. He specifically said that it is not expected to affect Care-A-Van service in any way, that two new drivers were starting and there is to be discussion about service expansion.

Jim also announced that CARTA was contacted by the Director of Transportation from SETHRA and asked if he would put a team together to make application to the Easter Seals Project Action to participate in a competition in Washington, D.C. to develop and propose a coordinated traffic transit plan for our community. This is a nationwide contest. CARTA applied and was successful. Jim is taking his team, Chris Kleehammer from SETHRA, Laura Smart of SETHRA, State Representative Bill Harmon, Sandy Booher and himself. This will take place July 12th through the 15th in D.C. The trip is expense paid. Jim said this couldn't have come at a better time as SETHRA has started building their transit hub. He doesn't know how many teams are competing but he expects to hear a lot of good proposals.

Sandy called for Announcements.

Bea passed out a flyer for the Walk 4 Hearing. There is a link on our website.

It was announced that the Emergency Shelter Plan Group met last week and they are compiling a list to make sure that they have all of the agencies that they need to have available to contact in the event of an emergency.

It was announced that the WhoFest will be an inclusive celebration at Renaissance Park sponsored by VSA, Allied Arts and City Parks and Recreation Department. There will be performers with disabilities there, an exhibit of artists with disabilities. Elaine Adams has worked hard on this event. More information on this event can be found on the City Parks and Recreation website.

Lana Newton, TN Division of Rehabilitation Services Program Director for Deaf-Blind, said she organized a deaf-blind symposium last week that had nine participants who were deaf and blind. This was the result of collaboration in the community from Signal Center, VITAL Center, TN DRS and the many businesses that made donations. The Director from the senior adult program from the Helen Keller National Center presented at this program. Eighteen professionals participated, nine participants and six family members came and learned more about how to advocate and how to learn different communication methods.

Jennifer Nichols, Americorps Volunteer at Signal Centers, announced that Signal Centers is hosting a Veterans Expo on Thursday, May 21st. There will be vendors with various types of technology to let veterans know what is available for people with disabilities in TN and GA. If anyone would like to do a booth, call Jennifer at 698-8528, ext. 254.

Matt Lea thanked the officers coming off the Council. He told Sandy Booher that the Council is where it is today because of the leadership that she provided along with Bea's assistance as Vice Chair. He also thanked Katye Jones for serving as Secretary.

Bryon Kluesner, UTC Disability Office announced that the group going to Australia raised a thousand dollars on their yard sale and what was left was donated to Teen Challenge.

The Tennessee Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (TRID) Conference is this weekend with 120 participants so far. Call Leslie Harms at 425-2202 if you have any interest. He also announced that this year's event during the October Disability Awareness month will have a big star from the deaf and hard of hearing community as keynote speaker, but he was not at liberty to release the name yet. Discussion followed.

Karl Epperson apologized to the Council for missing so many meetings. He also announced that two shuttles refused him admittance this afternoon because of his service dog. He had to make the trip by chair and was very irritated. Jim Queen, CARTA, apologized to Karl and said he will have a personal conversation with

the drivers and the supervisors to ensure this will never happen again.

Karl then introduced Pat Howard, who discussed the possibility of a wheelchair race for Go!Fest. She said that Sidney McDonald who works at the Bijou Theater challenged her to a race. They decided to organize a race and make it a fundraiser for their favorite charity. This is still in the planning process.

Matt Lea said he did have a safety concern about having this event at Go!Fest but that he really liked the idea and would check on it. He also explained that Go!Fest is dedicating any monies made to an inclusive playground at Warner Park.

Terri Rice suggested doing some paint art with wheelchairs similar to what they did in the Olympics on ice. Jill Hindman said that Fuller Rehab Supplies provided wheelchairs at the first Go!Fest for people to experience using a chair. Perhaps they will be willing to do that again this year.

Bea Lyons asked that the minutes be approved even in Katye's absence since she e-mailed them to everyone in advance of today's meeting. Bea said she prepared and distributed the minutes since we were several months behind on our website and she thought it made the Council look bad. Sandy called for a vote on approving the minutes. They were approved.

Kathie Fulgham reminded the group to sign up for a Go!Fest committee before they leave.

Sandy announced the next meeting will be June 1st at 3:00 at the DRC.

Minutes respectfully submitted,

Carol Martin, Secretary
Mayor's Council on Disability